

OAKLAND YOUTH RETURNS FROM SAILING ADVENTURES

TRIE D MAY 19 1941
Douglas Denton, 22, Oakland that he perished at sea. She hopes High School graduate who left and prays that he was picked up here a year ago with only a meager by warcraft that sunk the freighter knowledge of seamanship, arrived or managed to reach land, possibly back in Monterey yesterday as master of the yacht Sabrina. to be interned as a prisoner.

And today, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Denton, 2710 68th Avenue, went to meet him and hear his story of adventure in the South Pacific. Douglas Denton will come home tomorrow, but his mother doesn't know how long he will stay. It will be the old battle between his love of the sea and his liking for photography that will decide the matter.

And the camera has never won yet.

When young Denton set out on the 32-foot ketch Te Rapunga last June 1, he never had been to sea before. He had taken elementary navigation courses at evening school here.

He sailed with George Dibbern, the so-called "man without a country," who left Germany and tore up his passport to roam the high seas, and who now is a war prisoner in New Zealand.

PARTED AT HONOLULU

Denton left Dibbern at Honolulu and went ashore to make his living with his camera. His father is official photographer for the Oakland public schools. But his love for sailing took him to live at the Honolulu Yacht Club, where he began giving courses in small-craft navigation.

Then came Col. Frank Royce of the U.S. Army, who was transferred from Monterey to Hawaii. He owned the Sabrina.

But with the war threat becoming more serious daily, Colonel Royce decided that he would not be able to keep his yacht in the islands and he contracted with young Denton to bring it back to the mainland.

The youth picked his crew and set out, and they made the crossing in just 30 days, arriving in Monterey late yesterday.

OTHER SON MISSING

The parental welcome for Denton will be more than the ordinary for a son gone a year. Another son, Gordon Denton, 21, went out to sea on a Norwegian freighter last January and has not come back.

He sailed with the freighter Benjamin Franklin, which left Los Angeles January 12 with four \$100,000 Douglas bombers for Britain.

In March, Mrs. Denton was informed that the ship had been torpedoed 200 miles off the coast of Ireland and that her son was not among the survivors accounted for.

She refuses to believe, though

TRIB D MAY 23 1941

An adventure-filled year at sea was ended by Douglas Denton, 22, of Oakland today when he arrived home after delivering his "command," the yacht Sabrina, to its owner at Monterey as a climax to a storm-tossed voyage across the Pacific from Honolulu.

The Oakland High School graduate who left here last June 1 aboard the ketch Te Rapunga, skippered by George Dibbern, the German "man without a country," is through with the sea for a while... perhaps.

He's going into the commercial photography business with his father, Samuel Denton, of 2710 68th Avenue.

But he's still "open to offer" for a job as navigator or mate on a privately-owned sailing vessel.

GAINS EXPERIENCE

And he has experience—much of it—in sailing the high seas. A year ago his seaman's knowledge consisted chiefly of what he had been taught in elementary navigation courses taken at evening school here. Now he has just skippered and navigated the 42-foot Sabrina across 2500 miles of Pacific waters.

The youth had a crew of two with him on the choppy voyage. It consisted of Roland Grant, 24, as first mate, and Ching Ki-Whan, 52, a Korean, as cook.

Grant had been a seaman on the Director III, schooner used in a South Sea expedition of the American Museum of Natural History. He met Denton in Honolulu after his return from Australia, where the schooner had piled up on a reef.

Denton had contracted to sail the Sabrina from Honolulu to California for Lieut. Col. Frank Royce, its owner, who is now stationed with the Army at Monterey.

28-DAY TRIP

The youth and his crew set sail from Honolulu on April 20, expecting to make the trip to Monterey in about 40 days. They arrived last Sunday, making the crossing in 28 days.

"Captain" Denton sailed with the wind, charting a course 600 miles due north from Honolulu, then northeast to Monterey. The first 10 days of weather were "fine."

Then, when starting the turn east, the Sabrina ran into a severe gale. The storm lasted five days, and the yacht was blown 90 miles off of its course. Denton navigated by "dead reckoning."

Waves mounted 40 feet high. Several of them washed over the deck, pouring water into the cabins. Two halyards were lost; the head of one of the sails blew off, a jumper stay was carried away. Everything in the main cabin was tossed into a "mess."

RIDE OUT STORM

"We were worried for a while," Denton said today, "but the ship stood everything that wind and sea had to offer."

At nights, they "hove-to," and let the craft ride out the storm. In the morning, they put the Sabrina "back on what we thought was the course."

Two more storms, punctuated by calm, were encountered before the end of the trip. They were less severe than the first, however.

Denton was "commissioned" by Colonel Royce to bring the yacht here after he had spent several months in the Hawaiian Islands. He had left Dibbern, the German who tore up his passport to roam the seas, when the Te Rapunga arrived at Honolulu.

He went ashore originally to make his living with his camera, then took

up residence at the Honolulu Yacht Club, where he began giving courses in small-craft navigation.

BROTHER WAR VICTIM

A brother, Gordon, 21, shipped aboard the Norwegian freighter Benjamin Franklin last January. The ship was reported torpedoed by a U-boat off the coast of Ireland, and Gordon was not listed among the survivors.

Well-tanned Douglas, announcing running around in right now.

"I've had enough of the sea for awhile. It's not too healthy to be running around it right now.

"But I won't give up sailing. I'll do a little of it around the bay. And I'll keep up on my navigation—and my eye out for another berth."

'Man Without Country' Sails in Small Boat on South Seas Jaunt

TRIB D JUN 1 - 1940

The wide Pacific and the South Seas beckoned today to George Dibbern, German expatriate, and his strange crew of one woman and

two Alameda youths.

They set out from the Oakland Yacht Harbor in his 32-foot sailboat, the Te Rapunga, for Honolulu, New Zealand and the islands at the other side of the earth.

Miss Eileen Morris, 26, the woman, is navigator. Dibbern is master and the two youths, Mervin Stiles and Douglas Denton, 21, are the crew.

The Stiles boy joined the voyage almost as an afterthought. He didn't plan to go last night, but this morning, when the boat sailed, he was at the dock with his baggage.

A group of friends gathered at the harbor to bring gifts to the four and to wave them bon voyage as the little craft glided down the estuary. One friend, Art Gilman, used his sailboat, the Eulalie, to tow the Te Rapunga as far as the Golden Gate.

Dibbern, who left Germany before Hitler came to power and who virtually is a man without a country—he has no passport—plans to wander until he can find some place to live permanently. Already he has covered 60,000 nautical miles in search.

Before the war started he planned to settle in Canada, but his German origin prevented that after the hostilities. Miss Morris joined the odyssey in New Zealand a year ago.

They have been in Oakland since November, and left now because Dibbern's visiting permit expired.

RAG DOLL TRIPLETS

'BORN' ON 'BOAT

WITHOUT COUNTRY'

TRIBUNE JUL 8 - 1940

Perhaps 10 years of wandering around the seven seas with no home or country and a complete disregard for world affairs has shifted George Dibbern's sense of values.

At any rate, the modern man-without-a-country, who left Oakland 36 days ago for Honolulu in a 32-foot ketch, thinks more of rag dolls than he does of the fall of France.

Dibbern and his crew of one woman, Eileen Morris, 26, and two youths, Douglas Denton and Mervin Stiles, both of Alameda, arrived in Hawaii today. He was entirely unconcerned over France's defeat—although he is a native of Germany. He hadn't even heard that the French had fallen.

'TRIPLETS BORN'

But he was most enthusiastic over the "birth of triplets," which occurred en route across the Pacific. In fact, he made haste to write his friend, John Brison, 1306 Marin Avenue, Albany, secretary of the Richmond Yacht Club, of the "blessed event."

"The greatest event (of the crossing)," he wrote, "happened on Eileen's birthday. Mrs. Melinda, our sailorboy's wife, gave birth to triplets, and I was the doctor."

The message set things buzzing. Brison couldn't understand it. He didn't know of any "Mrs. Melinda" on the cruise. He thought that the three crew members and Dibbern were the only ones aboard. He was positive that neither of the youths was married.

Brison asked The Tribune to see if it could find out what happened. The Tribune went to work with the Associated Press, and after cables, telephone calls and several interviews, they learned that the "triplets" are:

Three rag dolls made by one of the two sailors in his spare time. He already had made the big one "Mrs. Melinda," so she was declared the "mother" of the new ones.

IT'S LIKE HIM

But that's like Dibbern. Since he left Germany 10 years ago, he hasn't acted like other men. In the first place, he tore up or lost his passport, so he can't return to Germany and can't stay in any other country very long. And then he designed his own flag and declared his boat, Te Rapunga, his country. As simple as that.

Miss Morris joined him in New Zealand, and the two Alameda youths here. They are going nowhere in particular, but they're still on their way.